

# ***eWiSACWIS Placement Documentation Manual:*** **Documentation Principles, Terminology and Requirements**

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## OVERVIEW:

The primary purpose of this manual is to clarify eWiSACWIS placement documentation requirements for child welfare staff, supervisors and managers. The manual is divided into four main components as follows:

- Core Principles to Placement Documentation
- Key Terms and Definitions for Placement Documentation
- Contact Information for Placement-Related Documentation
- “How Do I” Guides by Placement Setting (Appendix)

For purposes of this manual, the term “**child**” is used to address both children and juveniles served by county child welfare agencies, the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare and the state Special Needs Adoption Program or as part of the state’s juvenile correction aftercare program. The manual is intended for use by child welfare staff and managers to clarify and support placement documentation responsibilities. Additional direction is provided by the Title IV-E Handbook to the Statewide Eligibility Unit related to the unit’s specific responsibilities in using eWiSACWIS and child welfare documentation to determine and re-determine a child’s Title IV-E eligibility and reimbursability status.

When using the How Do I’s to guide placement documentation practices, the guides serve only as a core set of activities and pages that pertain to placements. These activities are not inclusive of all documentation needed for children who are subject to state and federal reporting requirements. The documentation depicted in these guides is not actual cases and names or gender of case head/reference persons are not necessarily reflective of typical case information.

## **PLACEMENT DOCUMENTATION PRINCIPLES:**

The following principles support documentation practices consistent with federal Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS) and ensure state and local capacity to measure placement outcomes prescribed by the federal Child and Family Services Review:

Following a child's removal from his or her family home to the date the child achieves a permanent outcome, e.g. reunification, adoption, guardianship, every day is associated with a specific out-of home placement setting for in the child.

A child's placement documentation reflects the actual location or the status of the child's location for any given day.

Timely and accurate placement documentation supports the following state and local responsibilities:

- Monitoring critical child placement conditions, e.g. missing or runaway children and child death;
- Complying with the Adoption and Safe Families Act permanency requirements and timeframes, and;
- Determining Title IV-E Eligibility status and claiming federal Title IV-E and Medicaid Targeted Case Management reimbursement.

## KEY PLACEMENT TERMS AND DEFINITIONS:

### *Placement Documentation Terminology*

One key concept to accurate placement documentation is that of a “**placement episode**.” A placement episode starts with a removal from home and ends with a discharge from Out-of-Home care. All days within a placement episode are documented using the Out-of-Home Placement Page in eWiSACWIS (see screen shot below).

Placements and Services - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by DHFS - State of Wisconsin

eWiSACWIS

Print Spell Check Help

Child: Abby, Simon Case Name: Abby, Art Request Number:

Service Provider

Placement Begin

Placement Begin Date: 04/15/2004 Placement End Date: 00/00/0000

Date Removed from his/her home: 04/15/2004 Estimated End Date: 00/00/0000

VPA Date: 00/00/0000 County: Milwaukee

Service Category: Kinship Care

Service Type: Kinship Care Prov. - CHPS

Placement Status: Kinship Care - Court-Ordered

Child Specific Rate: \$0.00

Current Basic Rate: \$215.00

Administrative Fee: \$0.00

Exceptional Amount: \$0.00

Supplemental Points: Supplemental Points Amount: \$0.00

Current Total Monthly Payment: \$215.00

Options: Go Save Close

### *Child Removal and Removal Date*

A placement episode begins with the date of a child’s **removal** where the child is taken into physical custody or where the child is placed under a formal voluntary agreement between the agency, the parents and the placement provider.

Documentation of the removal date is recorded in the “Date Removed from His/Her Home” field and is required when the placement is the first placement for the child or a previous placement ended with a discharge as described below.

***Placement Setting and Placement Setting Begin and End Dates***

A child may be placed with multiple providers and experience multiple placement settings during a single placement episode. These changes may be due to actions initiated by the agency, the provider, the child, the parent or the court. Also changes in the child's legal or financial status, e.g. SSI Eligibility, are documented in the OHP Page.

Each of these unique placement settings has a "Placement Begin Date" and "**Placement End Date**" documented in the OHP Page.

In the instance where a child is removed and has only one placement setting prior to his or her discharge from placement, the placement setting begin date is the same as the removal date and the placement setting end date is the same as the discharge date.

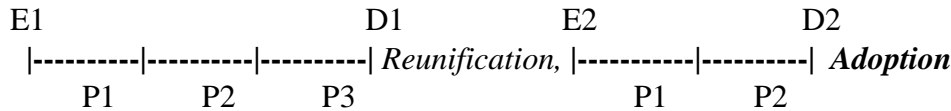
If the child is removed and has multiple placement settings prior to discharge, the removal date is the same as the begin date for the first placement setting and the discharge date is the same as the placement ending date for the last placement setting.

Specific placement service ending values in eWiSACWIS are used to denote changes in a placement setting or a transfer to a new agency while a child's placement episode continues pending permanency goal achievement and subsequent discharge from placement. Values associated with changing a child's placement or transferring responsibility for a child is provided in Attachment 1.

Additional placement service ending values may be used to document specific legal or fiscal changes or to end placements that are made in error for the child, but do not necessarily reflect actual changes in the child's placement provider. These values are listed in Attachment 1.

***Placement Episode Activity - Removal, Placement Changes & Discharge:***

In summary, a combination of these placement transactions, i.e. child removal, movement from one placement setting to another, discharge and subsequent placement episode can best be depicted as follows:



Explanation of Codes

- E1 = Date of first removal /initial entry to care; beginning of first Placement Episode
- D1 = Date of discharge from care; ending of first Placement Episode
- E2 = Date of second removal /second entry; beginning of second Placement Episode
- D2 = Date of second discharge; ending of second Placement Episode
- P1 – P3 = Change in Placement Settings with different placement providers, or in different placement settings within the placement episode.

***Placement Setting Categories, Types and Status***

Initial placement and changes in placement settings are reflected in the corresponding values associated with **Service Category**, **Service Type** and **Placement Status** in the OHC Placement Page.

**Service Categories** associated with placement documentation are generally established prior to eWiSACWIS implementation by the county and state eWiSACWIS technical team. Any additions or modifications to accommodate Service Categories related to placement services must be referred to the eWiSACWIS Project Team. Values associated with Service Category are county-specific.

**Service Types** are linked to a respective Service Category and are generally established prior to eWiSACWIS implementation by the county and state eWiSACWIS technical team. While counties may add service types, any additions or modifications to accommodate placement services must be referred to the eWiSACWIS Project Team in advance of such changes. Values associated with Service Type are county-specific.

**Placement Status** refers to basic placement setting status related to the Service Category and Type and choices are filtered based on the Service Category and Type selected. The Placement Status values represent different placement settings and are standardized for statewide use.

In order to minimize reporting errors, specific filtering mechanisms are in place between Service Category, Service Type and Placement Status. Based on the county-specific values, this ensures consistent linkages between these values to Placement Status values.

## PLACEMENT SETTING EXAMPLES AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Based on the Placement Status values provided in the Out-of-Home Placement Page, examples of the various placement settings subject to eWiSACWIS documentation are provided below.

As noted above, Placement Status values are filtered based on the Service Category chosen during documentation of the Out-of-Home placement page.

### *Standard Placement Settings (Required to be documented as an Out-of-Home Placement)*

Certain placement settings are always subject to be documented in eWiSACWIS due to Federal AFCARS or Title IV-E requirements. For purposes of this manual, these placement settings are referred to as “**standard**” settings. Standard placement settings represent the use of a facility or provider as a physical placement of the child from his or her family home. Therefore, the standard placement settings included below are always documented on the Out-of-Home placement page.

- Foster Homes, including Receiving/Assessment Homes, Licensed Foster Homes (Relative and Non-Relative), Treatment Foster Homes and Pre-Adoptive Foster Homes
- Court-Ordered Relative Home - Unlicensed Relative or Court-Ordered Kinship Care
- Unlicensed Non-Relative
- Group Home and Family Group Homes
- Residential Child Caring Centers (RCCs)
- Shelter Care/Reception Center (Applicable under situations described below)
- Secure Detention (Applicable under situations described below)

Specific examples of these settings and how they are to be documented in the OHP Page is detailed in the “How Do I” appendix to this manual. Such documentation should be completed in a timely manner to ensure that the documentation regarding the location and placement status of the child is inclusive of all such placement settings and reflect the past and current location or status of the child. Timely documentation also serves to provide accurate and timely payment to providers when applicable.

A brief explanations and simple case examples regarding the documentation of the use of Secure Detention and Shelter Care facilities follow. For more detail regarding documentation procedures, please refer to the respective "How Do I" Guides.

### *Variable Placement or Service Settings*

Documentation requirements, if any, of other placement settings may vary depending on the reason for using the facility or provider and other case specific circumstances. These placement settings are referred to as “**variable**” settings in that these requirements vary based on whether or not case circumstances require documentation in the Out-of-Home page or could be documented in the In-Home Service page. When documenting the use of a variable placement or service setting, it is important to make the distinction between documenting the use of a facility as a placement (Out-of-Home page) versus documenting the use of a facility as a service (In-Home Service page). The use of In-Home service for a placement is not subject to Title IV-E eligibility and practice requirements or AFCARS reporting requirements.

For example, a child goes from their home into a secure detention facility as part of a sanction and then returns home, this is considered a service that was provided to the family. This situation would be documented on the In-Home Service page.

However, if the child goes to the secure detention facility and then moves directly from that facility to a licensed placement facility, the original placement into the secure detention facility was the first placement setting in the child's placement episode and thus, must be documented as an Out-of-Home placement.

Ultimately, one should follow the guidelines that if the facility is being used as a court ordered Out-of-Home placement, or if it is one of multiple placements within an episode, then it needs to be documented on the Out-of-Home page.

If the facility is being used to provide a service to the child or family (i.e. secure detention or shelter care as part of a sanctions or respite care as part of an in-home safety plan), then it should be documented through the In-Home service page.

Listed below are some Variable placement settings and scenarios describing documentation requirements or options:



## **1) Secure Detention / Shelter**

If Secure Detention or Shelter (i.e. non-secure detention) is being used as a temporary corrective action service, such as a sanction or a 72 hour hold, the county is encouraged to enter the use of the facility in eWiSACWIS. In these cases the data entry may be entered as a service on the In-home Service page.

### Case Example- Documentation Required as an Out-of-Home Placement:

*Example 1-* A child who has been adjudicated as a delinquent is removed from the family and placed in secure detention or shelter care as part of a 72-hour hold. At the conclusion of the hold, the child is placed in a group home under court order. The secure detention placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the secure detention or shelter placement setting and the group home is the second placement setting within the same placement episode.

*Example 2-* A child who has been adjudicated as a delinquent has been removed from the family and placed in a group home. During this placement, the child is alleged to have committed another delinquent act and is placed in secure detention or shelter pending the next court hearing. The group home placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the group home placement and the next setting within the placement episode is the secure detention or shelter placement setting.

### Case Example- Documentation as In-Home Service:

*Example 1-* A secure detention facility or Shelter Care Facility is used as a 72-hour or sanction for a child who currently resides with his or her family. The child subsequently returns home following the hold or the sanction. Use of secure detention or shelter in this example does not constitute the removal of the child from the home or the start of a placement episode. Documentation may only be documented through the In-Home Service Page.

*Example 2-* A child is currently placed in out-of home care and a secure detention facility or Shelter Care Facility is used as a sanction (versus a change in the child's placement) while the child remains in a placement such as a Group Home, Foster Home, etc. The child's Out-of-Home placement setting continues to be documented in the OHP Page. The use of the secure detention or shelter as a sanction may only be documented in the In-Home Service page.

As presented in the attached How Do I's, documentation of the use of shelter and secure detention facilities as a corrective action service is not subject to federal AFCARS or Title IV-E requirements. As such, if the agency chooses to document these services in eWiSACWIS, they may only be appropriately documented in the In-Home Service page.

## **2) Hospital/Inpatient Facility**

Documentation on the Out-of-Home placement page for a child in a hospital or inpatient facility is required when the child subsequently enters into a standard placement setting listed above or when the hospital or inpatient facility placement takes place within a current placement episode.

### Case Example- Documentation Required as an Out-of-Home Placement:

*Example 1-* A child is removed from the family during the course of a CPS investigation and placed in a hospital for medical treatment. Subsequent to the hospital stay, the child is placed in a foster home under a court order. The hospital placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the hospital placement setting and the foster home is the second placement setting within the same placement episode.

*Example 2-* A child has been removed from the family and placed in a foster home. During this placement, the child exhibits significant psychiatric symptomology and is placed in an inpatient psychiatric facility for further assessment and treatment. The foster home placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the foster home placement. The next placement setting within this placement episode is the inpatient facility setting.

### Case Example- Documentation as and In-Home Service:

A child requires medical attention during the course of ongoing services where the child is being served in the family home. The parents admit the child to the hospital for treatment. The child subsequently returns home. Use of the hospital setting in this example does not constitute the removal of the child from the home or the start of a placement episode.

As presented in the attached How Do I's, documentation of use of hospitals/inpatient facilities not subject to documentation as part of a placement episode can be appropriately documented in the eWiSACWIS In-Home Service Page.

### **3) Mental Health Institution**

Documentation of the placement of a child in a mental health institution, such as Mendota Mental Health or Winnebago Mental Health Institutes, is required when the child subsequently enters into a standard placement setting listed above or when the institutional placement takes place within a current placement episode.

#### Case Example- Documentation as an Out-of-Home Placement:

*Example 1-* A child is removed from the family during the course of delivering ongoing case management services and placed in a mental health institution to address severe emotional and behavioral concerns. Subsequent to the institutional placement, the child is placed in a treatment foster home under a court order. The institutional placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the institutional placement setting and the treatment foster home is the second placement setting within the same placement episode.

*Example 2-* A child has been removed from the family and placed in a treatment foster home. During this placement, the child exhibits severe emotional and behavioral problems and is placed in a mental health institution for further assessment and treatment. The treatment foster home placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the treatment foster home placement. The next placement setting within this placement episode is the institutional placement setting.

#### Case Example- Documentation as an In-Home Service:

A child requires specialized mental health treatment services and supervision not available in the community during the course of delivering ongoing In-Home services to a family. The parents decide to voluntarily place the child in a mental health institution. The child subsequently returns home following treatment within the institution. Use of the mental health institution in this example does not constitute the removal of the child from the home or the start of a placement episode.

As presented in the attached How Do I's, documentation of use of hospitals/inpatient facilities not subject to documentation as part of a placement episode can be appropriately documented in the eWiSACWIS In-Home Service Page.

#### **4) Youth Correctional Facility and Aftercare Placement**

Documentation of the placement of a child in a youth or juvenile correctional facility is required when the child subsequently enters into a standard placement setting listed above or when the correctional placement takes place within a current placement episode. In addition, if a child returns to the agency for aftercare placement, documentation of these placements is required.

##### Case Example- Documentation as an Out-of-Home Placement:

*Example 1-* A child is placed in a youth correctional facility due to an adjudicated delinquency. Subsequent to the correctional placement, the child is placed in a group home under court order. The youth correctional facility placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the correctional placement setting and the group home is the second placement setting within the same placement episode.

*Example 2-* A child adjudicated as a delinquent has been removed from the family and placed in a group home. During this placement, the child commits another delinquent act and is ordered to a youth correctional facility. The group home placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the group home placement. The next placement setting within this placement episode is the youth correctional facility placement setting.

The child is not discharged from the group home placement setting as the agency anticipates the child will return for placement under an aftercare supervision order. However, if the child is not expected to return for after care services, the child would be discharged from the group home placement to end the placement episode.

##### Case Example- Documentation as an In-Home Service:

A child is directly committed to a youth correctional facility following a brief period in detention. The child is not expected to return to the county of origin for aftercare services or may transition to adult corrections at a future date. Use of the youth correction facility in this example does not constitute the removal of the child from the home or the start of a placement episode.

As presented in the attached How Do I's, documentation of use of a youth correctional facility not subject to documentation as part of a placement episode can be appropriately documented in the eWiSACWIS In-Home Service Page.

Any documentation of variable placement settings where such documentation is not required **can** be documented in the eWiSACWIS OHP Page or the In-Home Service Page for local reporting and monitoring purposes. In these instances, these placements are not subject to AFCARS reporting requirements and therefore, are excluded from

the state's AFCARS file. In addition, these placements are not reimbursable under Title IV-E and therefore, excluded from fiscal claiming by the Department of Family Services, Bureau of Fiscal Services through the use of applicable management reports. As such, an agency may establish local expectations that these specific placement settings are to be documented routinely in eWiSACWIS without compromising federal reporting or claiming responsibilities.

Specific examples of these settings and how they are to be documented in the OHP Page is detailed in the "How Do I" appendix to this manual. Such documentation should be completed in a timely manner to ensure that the documentation regarding the location and placement status of the child is inclusive of all such placement settings and reflect the past and current location or status of the child. Timely documentation also serves to provide accurate and timely payment to providers when applicable.

## **OTHER PLACEMENT-RELATED DATA ENTRY REQUIREMENTS:**

Children, youth and families served in the child welfare system present a wide array of needs to which agencies respond with a variety of creative service and placement resources. The following examples provide further direction regarding the documentation of placement information under unique service and placement conditions.

### **1) Wraparound Services**

Placement documentation for children who are in wraparound-type programs such as Wraparound Milwaukee, Family Partnerships, Inc., and Children Come First, are subject to the same documentation requirements as prescribed above. Based on the unique arrangements made by local agencies with these types of providers, documentation of placement information is to be consistent with local protocol and provider payment arrangements. Effective with the April 2004 eWiSACWIS Release, additional functionality was introduced to streamline payment processes with the prescribed documentation requirements.

### **2) Voluntary Kinship Care**

Many children reside with relatives where the parent and the relative have made the living arrangement voluntarily and the relative caregiver is eligible for and receives a Kinship Care payment to support their care of the relative child. Voluntary Kinship Care placements also include long-term kinship care as authorized by Chap. 48.977, Stats., and the agency is not or is no longer responsible for placement or permanency planning responsibilities. These arrangements are documented as child-only Kinship Care cases where the child is the reference person.

In some situations, the child and his or her parents become involved in the child welfare system due to CPS or juvenile service concerns and the relative caregiver continues to provide care under a court order. When the child's voluntary Kinship Care placement becomes court-ordered, a placement episode has begun as defined. This new status is true even though the child has not changed placement providers. As such, the voluntary kinship placement must be ended and the child only case closed. The child's court-ordered placement is documented as part of his or her family case and the placement is documented using the Service Type and Placement Status of Court-Ordered Kinship Care must be initiated. The removal date and the placement begin date are to reflect the date the court authorized the court-ordered placement with the relative caregiver. Court ordered kinship care is subject to Federal AFCARS reporting and IV-E eligibility determinations are done.

### **3) Respite Care**

Respite care services may be provided to parents or foster parents. In instances where respite care services are provided to parents to ensure child safety or support family reunification, the service (whether provided by a foster home or some other provider arrangement) is to be documented as part of an In-Home service in the In-Home Service Page.

If respite care is provided to a foster parent, the service may be documented as part of an In-Home service using the In-Home Service Page or via the Out-of-Home Placement Page. If used as an In-Home Service, the foster home placement remains open during the respite care. If used as an Out-of-Home placement, the foster home placement is ended and reopened following the respite care. It is important to note that if the latter method is used to facilitate administrative or fiscal processing of payment information, the respite care placement setting will be recognized as a change in the child's placement by AFCARS and as part of the federal Placement Stability outcome measure.

### **4) Receiving/Assessment Homes**

Placement in a foster home that is used by the agency as a receiving/assessment home constitutes a placement, usually at the start of a placement episode. Pending future policy clarification to regarding rate setting for receiving/assessment homes and the direction regarding provider and payment documentation in eWiSACWIS, children placed in these settings are subject to the Uniform Foster Care Rate (UFCR) policy regardless of how payment to these providers is arranged by the agency.

Previously, the one time payment was used to record/pay the "incentive" amount to receiving/ assessment homes. The one time payment is no longer being used to record this "incentive" amount as it does not allow for Title IV-E reimbursement.

The current method to appropriately document use of receiving/assessment homes is provided in the How Do I contained in the Appendix. In order to facilitate payment to these providers, the following direction is offered in completing the Rate Setting documentation currently required under the UFCR:

Prior to the end of the month in which a placement is made, the UFCR is used to document the \$25 per day rate that a receiving/assessment home may receive for a maximum of 30 days.

The amount which should be entered in the Exceptional amount field of the UFCR is  $30.416 \times \$25/\text{day}$  or \$760.25. This amount becomes prorated based upon batch file calculation in eWiSACWIS ( $\$760.25 / 30.416 = \$24.995/\text{day}$ )

Supplemental and Administrative amounts on this 30 day UFCR record should be set to zero. Therefore, all supplemental questions should be answered "NO" and no administrative amount should be entered.

It is very important that the placement be ended on or before the 30th day of placement to avoid overpayments to the provider. If the placement is to continue, a new placement and subsequent UFCR (reflecting actual supplemental and administrative fees) should be created."

## **5) Children in Medicaid (MA) Waiver Programs**

For children who are both in one of the MA Waiver Programs and in the child welfare system due to either CPS or Juvenile Service concerns, use of any Out-of-Home placement must be documented as described in this manual.

Funds that are received by local agencies from CIP, COP or the Children's Waiver to offset the child's cost of care must be documented in eWiSACWIS as described in the respective How Do I technical guide.

## **6) Trial Home Visits**

At this time, the direction from DCFS is that Trial Home Visits, or what an individual agency defines as a "trial home visit" or "extended visit" cannot be documented as a formal Trial Home Visit placement setting in eWiSACWIS. While eWiSACWIS offers the technical capacity for such documentation in the Out-of-Home page, there is no State policy direction to use and document these placement settings appropriately. DCFS is developing a Trial Home visit policy as part of its efforts with local agency and stakeholder representatives in the Program Enhancement Plan Out-of-Home Care Committee and once completed and implemented, this manual will be updated accordingly.



## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

For additional information regarding placement data entry on or problems in carrying out placement documentation responsibilities consistent with the direction provided in this manual, please contact the eWiSACWIS Help Desk. The help desk can be reached by phone or via e-mail as described below:

(608) 261-4400 or toll-free (866) 335-2180,  
TTY: 1-608-836-2852  
email -[Helpdesk@wi.gov](mailto:Helpdesk@wi.gov) (include eWiSACWIS in the subject line).

For email submissions, please use eWiSACWIS in the subject line or in the body of the email.

Provide the Service Desk agent a brief but informative description of the problem. Information like the Case ID or Provider ID and the name of the Page on which the problem occurs will facilitate a quicker response and resolution. (For cases, intakes, and providers, the ID can be found at the top of the respective Page.)

Remember that the person taking the call does not know the eWiSACWIS application, so the more detail you can provide the better. Let the Service Desk agent know if the problem is affecting multiple users. This is especially important for technical problem calls.

## **HOW DO I'S**

For each of the above Standard and Variable Placement Settings described above, technical instructions on how to document the actual placement setting appropriately are provided in the attached Appendix.